THE NEW YORK
SATURDAY PRESS.

HENRY CLAPP, JR., EDITOR.

VOL. V. NO. 6.
WHOLE NO. 140.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 10, 1866.

$3.00 A YEAR.
6 CTS. A NUMBER.

From the Californian.

THE HAUNTED MAN.

A CHRISTMAS STORY—BY CH-R-S D-C-K-N-S.

CONDENSED BY FRANCIS BRET HARTE.

PART I.

THE FIRST PHANTOM.

Don't tell me that it wasn't a knocker. I had seen it often enough, and I ought to know. So ought the the three o'clock beer, in dirty high-lows, swinging himself over the railing, or executing a demoniacal jig upon the door-step; so ought the butcher, although butchers as a general thing are scornful of such trifles! so ought the postman, to whom knockers of the most extravagant description were merely human weaknesses, that were to be pitied and used. And so ought, for the matter of that, &c., &c., &c.

But then it was *such* a knocker. A wild, extravagant and utterly incomprehensible knocker. A knocker so mysterious and suspicious that Policeman X. 37, first coming upon it, felt inclined to take it instantly in custody, but compromised with his professional instincts by sharply and sternly noting it with an eye that admitted of no nonsense, but confidently expected to detect its secret yet. An ugly knocker; a knocker with a hard, human face, that was a type of the harder human face within. A human face that held between its teeth a brazen rod. So hereafter, in the mysterious future should be held, &c., &c.

But if the knocker had a fierce human aspect in the glare of day, you should have seen it at night, when it peered out of the gathering shadows and suggested an ambushed figure; when the light of the street lamps fell upon it, and wrought a play of sinister expression in its hard outlines; when it seemed to wink meaningly at a shrouded figure who, as the night fell darkly, crept up the steps and passed into the mysterious house; when the swinging door disclosed a black passage into which the figure seemed to lose itself and become a part of the mysterious gloom; when the night grew boisterous and the fierce wind made furious charges at the knocker, as if to wrench it off and carry it away in triumph. Such a night as this.

It was a wild and pitiless wind. A wind that had commenced life as a gentle country zephyr, but wandering through manufacturing towns had become demoralized, and reaching the city had plunged into extravagant dissipation and wild excesses. A roystering wind that indulged in Bacchanalian shouts on the street corners, that knocked off the hats from the heads of helpless passengers, and then fulfilled its duties by speeding away, like all young prodigals—to sea.

He sat alone in a gloomy library listening to the wind that roared in the chimney. Around him novels and story-books were strewn thickly; in his lap he held one with its pages freshly cut, and turned the leaves wearily until his eyes rested upon a portrait in its frontispiece. And as the wind howled the more fiercely, and the darkness without fell blacker, a strange and fateful likeness to that portrait appeared above his chair and leaned upon his shoulder. The Haunted Man gazed at the portrait and sighed. The figure gazed at the portrait and sighed too.

"Here again?" said the Haunted Man.

"Here again," it repeated in a low voice.

"Another novel?"

"Another novel."

"The old story?"

"The old story."

"I see a child," said the Haunted Man, gazing from the pages of the book into the fire—"a most unnatural child, a model infant. It is prematurely old and philosophic. It dies in poverty to slow music. It dies surrounded by luxury to slow music. It dies with an accompaniment of golden water and rattling carts to slow music. Previous to its decease it makes a will; it repeats the Lord's prayer, it kisses the 'boofer lady.' That child——"

"Is mine," said the phantom.

"I see a good woman, undersized. I see several charming women, but they are all undersized. They are more or less imbecile and idiotic, but always fascinating and undersized. They wear coquettish caps and aprons. I observe that feminine virtue is invariably below the medium height, and that it is always babyish and infantine. These women——"

"Are mine."

"I see a haughty, proud, and wicked lady. She is tall and queenly. I remark that all proud and wicked women are tall and queenly. That woman——"

"Is mine," said the phantom, wringing its hands.

"I see several things continually impending. I observe that whenever an accident, a murder, or death is about to happen, there is something in the furniture, in the locality, in the atmosphere that foreshadows and suggests it years in advance. I cannot say that in real life I have noticed it—the perception of this surprising fact belongs——"

"To me!" said the phantom. The Haunted Man continued, in a despairing tone:

"I see the influence of this in the magazines and daily papers: I see weak imitators rise up and enfeeble the world with senseless formula. I am getting tired of it. It won't do, CHARLES! it won't do!" and the Haunted Man buried his head in his hands and groaned. The figure looked down upon him sternly: the portrait in the frontispiece frowned as he gazed.

"Wretched man," said the phantom, "and how have these things affected you?"

"Once I laughed and cried, but then I was younger. Now, I would forget them if I could."

"Have then your wish. And take this with you, man whom I renounce. From this day henceforth you shall live with those whom I displace. Without forgetting me, 'twill be your lot to walk through life as if we had not met. But first you shall survey these scenes that henceforth must be yours. At one to-night, prepare to meet the phantom I have raised. Farewell!"

The sound of its voice seemed to fade away with the dying wind, and the Haunted Man was alone. But the firelight flickered gaily, and the light danced on the walls, making grotesque figures of the furniture.

"Ha, ha!" said the Haunted Man, rubbing his hands gleefully; "now for a whiskey punch and a cigar."

BOOK II.

THE SECOND PHANTOM.

ONE! The stroke of the far-off bell had hardly died before the front door closed with a reverberating clang. Steps were heard along the passage; the library door swung open of itself, and the Knocker—yes, the Knocker—slowly strode into the room. The Haunted Man rubbed his eyes—no! there could be no mistake about it—it was the Knocker's face, mounted on a misty, almost imperceptible body. The brazen rod was transferred from its mouth to its right hand, where it was held like a ghostly truncheon.

"It's a cold evening," said the Haunted Man.

"It is," said the Goblin, in a hard, metallic voice.

"It must be pretty cold out there," said th Haunted Man, with vague politeness. "Do you ever—will you—take some hot brandy and water?"

"No," said the Goblin.

"Perhaps you'd like it cold, by way of change?" continued the Haunted Man, correcting himself, as he remembered the peculiar temperature with which the Goblin was probably familiar.

"Time flies," said the Goblin coldly. We have no leisure for idle talk. Come!" He moved his ghostly truncheon toward the window, and laid his hand upon the other's arm. At his touch the body of the Haunted Man seemed to become as thin and incorporeal as that of the Goblin himself, and together they glided out of the window into the black and blowy night.

In the rapidity of their flight the senses of the Haunted Man seemed to leave him. At length they stopped suddenly.

"What do you see?" asked the Goblin.

"I see a battlemented medieval castle. Gallant men in mail ride over the drawbridge, and kiss their gauntleted fingers to fair ladies, who wave their lily hands in return. I see fight and fray and tournament. I hear roaring heralds bawling the charms of delicate women, and shamelessly proclaiming their lovers. Stay. I see a Jewess about to leap from a battlement. I see knightly deeds, violence, rapine, and a good deal of blood. I've seen pretty much the same at Astley's."

"Look again."

"I see purple moors, glens, masculine women, bare-legged men, priggish book worms, more violence, physical excellence, and blood. Always blood—and the superiority of physical attainments."

"And how do you feel now?" said the Goblin.

The Haunted Man shrugged his shoulders. "None the better for being carried back and asked to sympathize with a barbarous age."

The Goblin smiled and clutched his arm: they again sped rapidly through the black night, and again halted.

"What do you see?" said the Goblin.

"I see a barrack room, with a mess table, and a group of intoxicated Celtic officers telling funny stories, and giving challenges to duel. I see a young Irish gentleman capable of performing prodigies of valor. I learn incidentally that the acme of all heroism is the cornetcy of a 'dragoon regiment. I hear a good deal of French! No, thank you," said the Haunted Man hurriedly, as he stayed the waving hand of the Goblin; "I would rather *not* go to the Peninsula, and don't care to have a private interview with Napoleon."

Again the Goblin flew away with the unfortunate man, and from a strange roaring below them, he judged they were above the ocean. A ship hove in sight, and the Goblin stayed its flight. "Look," he said, squeezing his companion's arm.

The Haunted Man yawned. "Don't you think, CHARLES, you're rather running this thing into the ground? Of course, it's very moral and instructive, and all that. But ain't there a little too much pantomime about it? Come now!"

"Look!" repeated the Goblin, pinching his arm malevolently. The Haunted Man groaned.

"Oh, of course, I see Her Majesty's ship *Arethusa*. Of course, I am familiar with her stern First Lieutenant, her eccentric Captain, her one fascinating and several mischievous midshipmen. Of course, I know it's a splendid thing to see all this, and not to be sea-sick. Oh, there the young gentlemen are going to play a trick on the Purser. For God's sake, let us go," and the unhappy man absolutely dragged the Goblin away with him.

When they next halted, it was at the edge of a broad and boundless prairie, in the middle of an oak opening.

"I see," said the Haunted Man, without waiting for his cue, but mechanically, and as if he were repeating a lesson which the Goblin had taught him, "I see the Noble Savage. He is very fine to look at! But I observe under his war paint, feathers and picturesque blanket—dirt, disease, and an unsymmetrical contour. I observe beneath his inflated rhetoric deceit and hypocrisy. Beneath his physical hardihood, cruelty, malice and revenge. The Noble Savage is a humbug. I remarked the same to Mr. Catlin."

"Come," said the phantom.

The Haunted Man sighed, and took out his watch. "Couldn't we do the rest of this another time?"

"My hour is almost spent, irreverent being, but there is yet a chance for your reformation. Come!"

Again they sped through the night, and again halted. The sound of delicious but melancholy music fell upon their ears.

"I see," said the Haunted Man, with something of interest in his manner; "I see an old moss-covered manse beside a sluggish, flowing river. I see weird shapes: witches. Puritans, clergymen, little children, judges, mesmerized maidens, moving to the sound of melody that thrills me with its sweetness and purity. But, although carried along its calm and evenly-flowing current, the shapes are strange and frightful: an eating lichen gnaws at the heart of each; not only the clergyman, but witch, maiden, judge, and Puritan, all wear Scarlet Letters of some kind burned upon their hearts. I am fascinated and thrilled, but I feel a morbid sensitiveness creeping over me. I—I beg your pardon." The Goblin was yawning frightfully. "Well, perhaps, we had better go."

"One more, and the last," said the Goblin. They were moving home. Streaks of red were beginning to appear in the eastern sky. Along the banks of the blackly flowing river; by moorland and stagnant fens, by low houses clustering close to the water's edge, like strange mollusks, crawled upon the beach to dry; by misty black barges, the more misty and indistinct seen through its mysterious veil, the river fog was slowly rising. So rolled away and rose from the heart of the Haunted Man, &c., &c.

They stopped before a quaint mansion of red brick. The Goblin waved its hand without speaking.

"I see," said the Haunted Man, "a gay drawing room. I see my old friends of the club, of the college, of society, even as they lived and moved. I see the gallant and unselfish men, whom I have loved, and the snobs whom I have hated. I see strangely mingling with them, and now and then blending with their forms, our old friends Dick Steele, Addison, and Congreve. I observe, though, tha these gentlemen have a habit of getting too much in the way. The royal standard of Queen Anne, not in itself a beautiful ornament, is rather too prominent in the picture The long, drawn galleries of black oak, the formal furniture, the old portraits are picturesque, but depressing. The house is damp. I enjoy myself better here on the lawn, where they are getting up a Vanity Fair. See, the bell rings, the curtain is rising, the puppets are brought out for a new play. Let me see."

The Haunted Man was pressing forward in his eagerness, but the hand of the Goblin stayed him, and pointing to his feet, he saw between him and the rising curtain, a new-made grave. And bending above the grave in passionate grief, the Haunted Man beheld the phantom of the previous night.

* * * * * *

The Haunted Man started, and—woke. The bright sunshine streamed into the room. The air was sparkling with frost. He ran joyously to the window and opened it. A small boy saluted him with "Merry Christmas." The Haunted Man instantly gave him a Bank of England note. "How much like Tiny Tim, Tom and Bobby that boy looked—bless my soul, what a genius this Dickens has!"

A knock at the door, and Boots entered.

"Consider your salary doubled instantly. Have you read *David Copperfield?*"

"Yezzur."

"Your salary is quadrupled. What do you think of the *Old Curiosity Shop?*"

The man instantly burst into a torrent of tears, and then into a roar of laughter.

"Enough! Here are five thousand pounds. Open a porter-house, and call it 'Our Mutual Friend.' Huzza! I feel so happy!" And the Haunted Man danced about the room.

And so, bathed in the light of that blessed sun, and yet glowing with the warmth of a good action, the Haunted Man, haunted no longer, save by those shapes which make the dreams of children beautiful, reseated himself in his chair, and finished *Our Mutual Friend.*

(For the Saturday Press.)

SONG.

The sunset darkens in the west,
  The sea-gulls haunt the bay,
And far and high the swallows fly
  To watch the dying day.
Now where is she that once with me
  The rippling waves would list?
And O for the song I loved so long,
  And the darling lips I kist!

Yon twinkling sail may whiter gleam
  Than falcon's snowy wing,
Her lances far the evening-star
  Beyond the waves may fling;
Float on, ah float, enchanted boat,
  Bear true hearts o'er the main,
But I shall guide thy helm no more,
  Nor whisper love again!

No more! there is a sunlit land
  A thousand leagues away:
She walks the sand upon its strand,
  Nor listens to my lay;
She fondles there her yellow hair,
  And clasps her robes with gold;
I wander o'er this darkling shore
  And watch the night unfold.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

(*From Chambers' Journal.*)

LOW LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

Now, whom was it that he reminded me of? Why, of Spangles, of course. And as the tardy policeman had by this time arrived, and closed the proceedings, we did not stand upon the order of our going, but went at once.

I was returning from the theatre shortly before midnight, and, in one of the small streets leading out of Oxford Street, I perceived a goodly-sized crowd, from the middle of which came a man's voice high in oath, and two brawny arms brandished in defiance. I always stop and look on at a row, for the sake of studying the realities; so I pushed my way into the crowd, and as I got near the heart of it, heard something like this, delivered at the top of the speaker's voice:

"Come on, you beggar! Let me go, I tell you. I'll break every blessed bone in his cursed carkiss, before he's two minutes older. Come on, you——." (N. and M. to take a hint from the Catechism.) "I'll spile your pretty face for you. Do you think, because you're a 'eavy swell, you can insult our wives, and play what tricks you like? I'll teach you to insult mine, anyway. Come on"—N. and M.—"and see if I don't knock every hatom of wind——"

The rest of the passage was so corrupt that it would be utterly unintelligible to, at any rate, the *gentle* reader; therefore I will merely say that it was generally to the effect that the speaker proposed depriving some one of every particle of breath, and reducing this person's outer man to such a state of blood and bruises, that his nearest relations would be unable to tell the difference between him and an exploded Guy Fawkes; and that if he, the speaker, allowed himself more time than two minutes and a quarter to work this radical change, it was his ardent wish that all the elements of nature would unite to cause his own immediate and utter destruction.

By this time, I had got to the front row, and saw a big burly fellow, with his coat off, and his sleeves turned up, trying to pull himself away from his wife and a friend, in the direction of a young man, evidently a gentleman, as his calmness, in contrast with the bluster of his antagonist, testified.

"I never insulted your wife," he said, raising his voice no more than was necessary to make himself heard; "she knows I did not. However, it's no good arguing with the fellow. Loose me, Charley."

The costermonger—I am sure he was a costermonger—shook his wife off, broke from his friend, dashed past me like a whirlwind; I saw his brown arms cutting great curves in the air; then a white hand shot like a flash of lightning from his adversary's shoulder; and the defender of conjugal honor, when next beheld, was sitting in the gutter, with a look of the utmost astonishment upon his face. The crowd laughed, which increased the wrath, though it failed to refresh the courage of the fallen costermonger. Warned by the force of the blow which had dropped him, and perhaps anxious besides to keep as near as possible to the fountain-head of inspiration, he did not attempt to rise from the gutter, but contented himself with shouting out at his antagonist a volley of vile and shameful words, for the selection of which his seat in the kennel must have been very handy. Nor were his denunciations directed entirely against his late adversary. His wife, who by some means was the cause of the quarrel; his friend, who had interfered; the lookers-on who had laughed; and even his own eyes, body, and limbs came in for a share. Such a noise as this could not go on for very long without attracting a police man, and it was just as this official made his appearance, and as the crowd, principals and witnesses, were hastily dispersing, that I smote upon my thigh, and cried: "Spangles, of course."

And who was Spangles? Not know Spangles! Not know the great tragedian, beloved by gods and men, but principally by the gods! Why, if a vote were taken as to what actor best deserves the title of the Roscius of the day, Spangles would have the people's voice to a man, for the people's voice is the voice of the gods. Still, if you ask me to say candidly what I myself think about him, I should whisper to you that, to my mind, Spangles, as an actor, is *Vox et præterea nihil;* and I ought to be able to give an opinion, for on this very evening I had seen, or, more correctly, heard him in *Othello*. Not that it was with any wish either to hear or see Spangles that I had gone to the theatre this evening. No; Spangles was only a necessary evil that I was obliged to put up with. My real reason for going was that I desired to see some low life above stairs; so I put on a very old hat, and a very old coat, which, however, seemed to me but thinly to disguise my naturally aristocratic exterior, and set off with the intention of going into the gallery. I wished to see what sort of people went there, how they behaved, and in what light they regarded the legitimate drama; for *Othello* was to be the play, and Spangles was to take the Moor.

I could not at first find the entrance to the sixpenny-gallery, the favorite abode of the gods; I found the shilling-gallery, but that was not nearly low enough for me; so I asked a policeman—with some embarrassment, I confess, and with a meaning smile that was intended to put the officer up to the fact, that it was no regular gallery-goer who asked the question, but a philosophically-inclined member of the most select circles—where the sixpenny-gallery was. The policeman, without exhibiting the least surprise at my question, or manifesting any wonder at my going to such a part of the house—my disguise was evidently more perfect than I supposed; but still, a policeman's eye ought to have penetrated it—stolidly replied: "The other side the 'ouse—in Blank Street."

"You 'll never rise very high in *your* profession, my good fellow," I muttered, as I followed his directions, penetrated to Blank Street, and began, with a number of others, the ascent of a staircase, which seemed as if it aspired the clouds. Flight after flight I surmounted; corner after corner I turned, and at last reached the money-taker's box; but this, which I had thought would surely be the end of my journey, was only the half-way house.

I was delayed here for a short time, until a woman with four babies had concluded an argument with the money-taker on the subject of half-price for children; and after this was arranged, my progress was necessarily slow, as I was obliged to follow in the wake of this body of infantry. This, however, gave me all the more time for observing my companions, and judging of their position in life by the remarks that fell from them; and when I overheard one man whisper to his neighbor: "I say, Bob, don't this remind you of the mill?" I felt much satisfaction in the thought that I was actually touching a thief, and still more in the recollection that my watch and purse were both safe at home.

When we had ascended about half a mile, according to my calculation, the mother of the four asked me whether I would mind taking charge of one of the children till we reached the summit. I am of a fatally-yielding disposition; the infant looked tolerably clean, so I consented; and as I slowly mounted the stairs, Boswell's question to Johnson: "What would you do, sir, if you were shut up in a tower with a baby?" recurred forcibly to me. The child contented itself during the journey with staring fixedly at me, and biting its thumb in an insulting manner; but when we had almost reached the head of the staircase, excited, I suppose by the elevation which it had gained, it set to work crowing—don't they call it crowing?—like the early village cock; to stop which performance as speedily as possible, I pushed past the mamma, surmounted the remaining bit of the Hill Difficulty, gained the House Beautiful, and stood at last in the gallery, a god confessed. Rendering up my charge to its mother, who was very grateful, I walked along the barrier at the back of the gallery-benches, in the hope of finding a seat unoccupied; but I had come rather late; the first piece, a farce, was over, and the people were waiting anxiously for the curtain to rise upon the tragedy. As I did not come to see the play, this did not much matter, so I leaned against the barrier, and stared about me.

The gallery itself was a dingy, gloomy, by no means fragrant loft. Looking down into the house was like looking from under a shade, such as weak-sighted persons wear to defend their eyes. The roof came down like a huge poke to a cap; and almost in a line between me and the stage hung the chandelier. Eating and drinking, occasionally kicking the boards, to intimate to the management that they were waiting, but far quieter than I had expected, the gods thronged the benches before me. I was surprised at the quiet that prevailed. There was scarcely any laughing; conversation was, as a rule, carried on in a low tone; I heard but one of those shrill whistles with which a playful divinity is wont to make the whole house ring; add the grave and decorous feeling which seemed to pervade the entire assembly, was well expressed in this short speech, made by one near me: "It [the tragedy] ain't begun yet. You're in lots of time. The first piece is just hover—only a hijiotic farce." The coming tragedy evidently cast its shadow before; the gods were seriously preparing their minds for the terrible drama.

Feeling rather like Ixion in heaven, I proceeded to observe the gods more minutely, and by what I knew of their attributes, to distinguish one from another. There was no

difficulty in finding Vulcan—he was omnipresent. The grimy god was to be seen everywhere, with his coat off and his sleeves turned up, as if he had been forging thunderbolts up to the last minute. It was not easy, however, without making invidious distinctions, to say who should be considered the original Vulcan; but as I last pitched upon a person who, besides being of superior foulness to his fellows, was entitled to the preference on the ground of his being seated near a very pretty girl—Venus, of course. Venus was the gem of the gallery, and, with her soft dovelike eyes and bright smile, would have passed for the goddess of love in very much better company than she was in at present. Close beside Venus, as might have been expected, was Mars, an immensely tall Lifeguardsman, between whom and his fair neighbor there seemed to exist a certain sympathy, occasioned, perhaps, by the fact, that while she was dove-eyed, he was pigeon-breasted; or it may have been only the attraction that a pretty face invariably has for a red coat, and a red coat for a pretty face. But where was Apollo? Where was the god of day? I was inclined to think at first that my own imme diate neighbor was the deity in question, from the extraordinary interest he took in the music.

"What d'you think of that now?" he murmured to a friend beside him. "There's a twist for you. Don't he come round 'em? My! what a 'and for a fiddlestick he has got." And so on. But as the music did not seem to me to merit especial commendation, and as my friend's facial parts did not at all come up to my ideas of Apollo, I changed my mind; and concluded that he was some inferior divinity, who took, after the custom of the Olympians, an especial interest in some individual fiddler in the orchestra.

As I was gazing carefully round, looking about vainly for an Apollo, a voice from the farther side of the gallery called out—the gods have a habit of occasionally shouting to each other—"Bill, where's Ginger?" To which was replied from my side of the house:

"He's gone down." This threw some light upon the subject. Evidently, amongst the Immortals, the sun-god was known as "Ginger," on account of the warm and brilliant nature of his duties; and the expression "gone down," with reference to him, needs no explanation. There was no chance of mistaking Bacchus; he was very near me, and past all controversy, rather in nectar. Neptune, in the disguise of a waterman to a cabstand, was leaning with his head over the edge of the gallery, as if he were sea-sick. And as for the god Pluto, a moment's thought reminded me that he could not be here; he would be in the pit, of course. So there they swarmed expectant, those happy gods; lolling about with their coats off, drinking their nectar out of black bottles, and staring down, as many of them as were near the front, upon "the gleaming world" beneath.

But, hark! the cry is Silence. The overture ceases; the patron of the fortunate musician murmurs, referring to his protegee's fiddle: "Hunscrew him, Jemmy—hunscrew him; that's right, my boy; don't keep him too tout. Ah, that is a hinstrument!" The curtain rises, and the gods, with one consent, cheer the entrance of Iago and Roderigo. About the acting I have nothing to say, excepting that everybody, especially Spangles, was applauded; and that, before the play was done, everybody, especially Spangles, was hoarse; that, to my eyes, situated as I was at the very back of the gallery, and looking down upon the stage through two ambrosial whiskers, each belonging to a different god, Spangles was foreshortened to that degree, that he looked little more than a head and front, underneath which his feet worked backwards and forwards most absurdly; and that, though it was with some difficulty that I heard Iago. and very often did not hear Desdemona at all, yet, whenever Spangles spoke, his voice filled the theatre like the roar of a lion.

I looked round upon my companions, and was astonished at the fixed attention, the reverent silence that characterized the whole congregation. Except when they applauded, or interfered in the cause of order, they were as quiet as mice; even murmured conversation was silenced at once; the footfall of any one moving about was sure to cause indignant remonstrances; and Bacchus, who declined to hold his tongue when the curtain rose, and insisted upon singing that he wouldn't go home till morning, was summarily kicked out, and bidden to go home at once. The gods had eyes and ears for nothing but Shakspeare. I never saw in any other part of the theatre such deep attention as this. Here were artisans, navvies, porters, cabmen, and shop-boys listening to Shakspeare, as if they loved him—bending forward with an eagerness that was strangely at variance with the conduct of the better part of the audience. Position in the theatre may no doubt have something to do with this. If you are in the stalls, you lean back to look up to the stage; whereas, if you are in the gallery, you bend forward to look down upon it, and bending forward is the attitude of attention. Then again, stalls and boxes can hear what is said without straining their necks, and giving their whole mind to it. It is not necessary for the occupants of those parts of the house to put their heads on one side, so that the orifice of the ear may present its full front to the voice of the speaker; neither are they obliged to make ear-trumpets of their hands in order to catch the sounds. But to say that the people in the gallery adopt these methods, is only to say that they put themselves to a great deal of inconvenience in their anxiety not to lose a single precious word; besides, it is only at the very back of the gallery, where I was, that there is any difficulty in hearing. The people on the gallery benches appeared to me to hear perfectly well.

But there is far more in it than this. No one, I am certain, who will regard the whole house with an impartial eye, but must confess that we in the gallery are the true patrons of the legitimate drama. Let those born to private boxes, like horses, or to stalls, like oxen, delight in the flimsy artificialities of opera, where heroes die to music, and heroines sing their French morals in Italian verse to the tune of fifty pounds a night; let your tenants of the circle and the pit revel in the broad fun of farce, and go into ecstasies over the drivelling nonsense of burlesque, which, having undertaken to shew up the folly of opera, has succeeded in most effectually discovering its own: we in the gallery care little for any of these things. We want something real, some thing serious, and Shakspeare is the man for us.

Why, while the gentle-folk below are lolling back in their arm-chairs, sighing and yawning, look at us in the gallery. Do we gape or sigh wearily? Look how we, with our coats off, and our sleeves turned up, so that we may have the full use of our faculties, hang on the inspired words! See how we bend over the iron rail, or hold it in our mouths like a bit, as if to curb our wild enthusiasm, and keep ourselves from shouting our admiration in the middle of a sentence! Look how we are piled one upon the top of another, face rising above face like the heap of heads at the gate of Samaria! Observe how every action and sentiment find their instant echo in the gallery! Othello is suddenly overcome with the conviction of his wife's faithlessness. To express that conviction, he rolls his eyes, and grasps his throat, as if choking. We, responsive to the magic of the scene, stare like him, and, like him, clutch our gullets. And now the jealous Moor, fury in his heart, bursts into a torrent of wrath, raves against the guiltless Desdemona for her supposed inconstancy, and carried this way and that by the gusts of passion, rages by turns against his wife, his friend, and himself, till he is completely out of breath, and must be quite independent of his dye, being black in the face from natural causes. Then our pent-up admiration makes itself heard. Taking advantage of the full stop, we rise like one man, and shout our approval with a voice as loud as Othello's own.

No one can doubt who sees them, that these uneducated people in the gallery delight in what they have heard much more than the well-educated people below. And why is this? I don't believe for an instant that the better classes are insensible to the power and beauty of Shakspeare. I believe, on the contrary, that they (sometimes) read him at home, and heartily admire and love him. Then why is it that, when he is acted, it is only the most uneducated persons amongst the audience who seem thoroughly to relish what they hear?

It was this question that I was revolving in my mind as I paced along Oxford Street on my way home, and had the happiness to come upon the row that I have described at the beginning of this paper; and it was the sudden light that this row threw upon my reflections that made me smite my thigh, and exclaim: "Spangles, of course." This costermonger, under the belief that his wife had been insulted, raged and roared exactly as Spangles's Othello did when under the belief that Desdemona was untrue.

My difficulty was solved at once. The real reason why a tragedy of Shakspeare is more acceptable to the uneducated part of the audience than to the educated, is because the way in which the ordinary tragic actor of the day, with one or two exceptions, delineates the intenser passions, strikes the gallery as true to nature, and strikes the boxes and stalls as untrue. When Othello raves, and foams, and yells, as Spangles forces him to do, the people in the stalls know perfectly well that a gentleman, however jealous he might be, would not behave in that way. The gallery, on the contrary, instantly acknowledges the truth of such a representation of jealousy. Every man

of them feels that, if he were in Othello's case, he should roar as Spangles does; and every howl of the actor's reminds him of his own or his friend's conduct when under the influence of strong passion. What, therefore, to the gallery is a close and masterly imitation, to the stalls is a piece of vulgar blatant exaggetion.

I shall not take upon myself to decide which is the correct view to hold as regards Spangles's acting. I will only say that I have no wish that the tameness, against which Hamlet warns his players, should be characteristic of ours. If there is any one who cannot understand how passion can be expressed without noise, let him go upon the stage at once; he is certain to succeed as a tragic actor. The gods will love him, and if he do not break a blood-vessel early in his career—for "whom the gods love die young," remember—he will no doubt be in time considered one of the lights of the stage. But sound is no more passion than the binding is the book, than the frame is the picture.

And of a truth I felt, as I stood in the gallery that evening, that, put the picture into how wretched soever a frame—a frame heavy in design, and of the loudest pattern—yet the picture is still there in marvellous beauty. A play of Shakspeare, represented even in this way, must do these people good. It must awaken in them the sense of admiration for what is beautiful and pure, and of hatred for what is cruel and treacherous. And it did me good, too, to stand there with Shakspeare's lines ringing in my ears, and their manifest influence upon others working before my eyes, and to feel, more strongly than I ever felt before, that to enjoy him, who of all poets is the most natural, no great amount of wisdom or learning is required; that rich and poor, and vulgar and refined, can all discover stores of delight in him; and that the magic touch with which he has represented nature, does indeed make "the whole world kin."

THE BELTON ESTATE.

Mr. Trollope always writes pleasantly. Let him select what subject he may—women, clergymen, lawyers, stupid boobies, or clever men of the world—he brings to each task a photographic observation which sees everything, an industry which omits nothing, and a shrewd, skeptical common sense which protects him as effectually from puerility and silliness, as it bars him from the inspirations of genius. In his books everything is done well. He slights nothing. Every trait, every act, every gesture is noted, every inference carefully considered, every phrase studied. He has been trained to literature as thoroughly as any pugilist to the ring, and his careful, effective work is certainly very easy and pleasant reading. Moreover, he steadily improves. His latest work is his best. He is more reticent than he was formerly—does not elaborate with such painful minuteness. He occupies, also, his most advantageous ground. For though he tells well whatever he attempts at all, yet there is a zest and flavor about the average young woman, as served up by Mr. Trollope, which his middle-aged clergymen and hard-featured attorneys do not possess. His studies in this direction are marvels of industry and insight. The thoughts and emotions of a commonplace girl, who has no idiosyncrasies of character or intellect, and no special mission beyond eating, dressing and sleeping, do not apparently offer a very promising field for a novelist, but in them Mr. Trollope is thoroughly at home. He pores over uninteresting people with a patience like that of a naturalist, studying the habits and structural peculiarities of an oyster.

His present heroine, Miss Clara Amedroz, having two suitors for her hand, accepts the wrong man and rejects the right. This mistake occurs early in the volume, and the rest of Mr. Trollope's work consists in a skilfull analysis of the young lady's feelings during the time it takes her to discover her error, and an entertaining account of the characters and surroundings of the men themselves. If it be admitted that a novel has no legitimate end beyond the amusement of an idle hour, which seems to be Mr. Trollope's theory, it cannot be denied that this book admirably fulfils such a purpose. It rehearses the thoughts and actions of stupid and uninteresting people without partaking of either characteristic; it is minute, but not tedious; elaborate, but has not too studied a perfection. If it thrills us with no passion, elevates us with no noble sentiment, it also never sickens us with twaddle, nor disgusts us with mawkish sentimentality. His men and women are always vital, and their merit as close studies can hardly be denied, even by those who doubt the utility of making such.

Yet it is certain that in spite of the uniformly entertaining character of Mr. Trollope's novels, there is a feeling that with all their merits they fall far short of the highest art. He tells admirably all that he sees, but his skepticism prevents him from seeing everything. The habits and instincts of men interest him—their virtues and vices offer remunerative fields of employment, but he does not in his heart believe that good and bad are widely differenced. He knows, of course, all the talk about life as an education and a symbol, but he concludes to stick to the matter in hand. It is good to be honest and honorable, and bad to be stupid and to be made game of,—but, after all, there are compensations. The devil is not so black as he was painted, nor the saint so white. Life is flat and prosaic, and hardly pays for the trouble it entails.

Now, all this is, in a manner, true. None of us find life very heroic. The soldiers probably thought oftener of the privations of camp life than of the glories of patriotism; their courage on the field was more brute instinct than a sense of duty and honor. It is true, that we live in particulars, that we dawdle and simper, and seem to have no special end in view but bread and butter. Nevertheless, there is an instinct which revolts at being told that there is nothing beyond this. The sane moments, in which life is seen to have a purpose beyond materialism, stand for more with us than all the years in which we play at trifles. The great service which the poets and men of genius do us, is to lift the mask of shams, and show us the real significance of things. The skeptics amuse us, but the laughter they cause is bitter. And our complaint against Mr. Trollope is not that he details commonplaces, and cannot paint genius and heroism, but that he neither dignifies the one nor believes in the other. His books are mere playthings, to be read and forgotten. Literature suffers in his hands, loses its dignity as a guide and consoler and becomes merely a trick and a toy.

"ENOUGH IS AS GOOD AS A FEAST."

Query, Is it?

Whenever the goddess of pleasure
  Enriches our life from her store,
If we seek for too brimming a measure
  And are greedy enough to wish more,
We are told that our judgment is blinded,
  When our bliss we would fain have increased,
And by prudence are gently reminded
  That "Enough is as good as a feast!"

It is no novel saying, for ages
  Have put it full oft to the test—
'Tis admitted by fools and by sages
  That "POPULI VOX DEUS EST;"
Yet still—it may be my affliction—
  From delusion I am not released,
And I cannot accept the conviction
  That "Enough IS as good as a feast!"

Of the goods that we need for existence
  I may possibly have just enough—
Can live without asking assistance
  Of friends—have, in fact QUANTUM SUFF.
Pay my bills, though it needs some exertion—
  And am not in debt in the least;
Still I do not believe the assertion
  That "Enough is as good as a feast!"

I am fond of my port after dinner,
  That is—when I've the luck to dine out;
But, alas! a poor, frail, feeble sinner,
  The demon that haunts me is gout!
My youth and my nerves, and digestion,
  Are things that have long since deceased—
Just answer me plainly the question—
  Is "Enough then as good as a feast?"

"Enough!" 'tis a dubious expression!
  Can we get it? ah, that is the rub!
"Enough," if we trust his confession,
  DIOGENES found in a tub!
It was doubtless an adequate mansion
  For a sneering and cynical beast;
For mankind 'twould have needed expansion
  Before 'twas "as good as a feast."

(*For the Saturday Press.*)

ON A FARM.

V.

Burlington, N. J., Jan. 29, 1866.

DEAR PRESS:—

It strikes me sometimes a little unpleasantly to see the great number of public sales advertised continually about here, of farms, farming stock, utensils, household furniture, etc. (Melancholy thoughts will obtrude themselves regarding a possible future when, my experiment of farming on a small scale having failed ignonimiously, I too shall appear for sale on the fences and in the stores and barber's shops.)

I find that if a man wants to sell anything in this region he immediately advertises a Vendue ("wandoo" some of the natives style it.)

I have been to several, but have not purchased extensively, as I have ascertained that articles thus sold here generally bring more than they cost when new.

They are curious gatherings these vendues.

The family selling usually give a family dinner party, to which relations and friends sit down and prepare for the family sacrifice by a feast.

Then an itinerant dealer in the drink of the country, popularly known as apple-whiskey but disrespectfully spoken of by outside barbarians from the States as "Jersey-lightning," sets up his stand in the front yard, and, the crowd having drunken somewhat, the sale begins.

It is a motley crowd: all the farmers from the neighborhood are there: They have come in Jersey wagons, in carts, on horse back, on mule back and on foot.

And they bid very considerably.

The auctioneer dwelleth not long over his wares, and pauseth in his selling only to imbibe an occasional draught of apple."

I have always felt an admiration for auctioneers: they are surely a class by themselves, as distinct from ordinary mortals as are hotel-clerks or railroad conductors.

Very glib and brassy, of course: Somewhat apt to make mistakes in descriptions of unfamiliar articles.

I remember a very funny man in Greenfield, Massachusetts, who signally failed once in the description of a book he put up.

He was a jovial fellow—not an auctioneer "by trade," exactly, though licensed to sell in that way, if he chose.

So he chose to sell a library some one wanted to dispose of.

He hadn't read very much in books, Robbins hadn't, but he scanned the titles, trusted to luck, and went ahead:—

"Here you have," he cried, "Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress; how much 'm offered for it? How much do I hear for the Pilgrim's Progress, by John Bunyan? 'T's a first rate book, gentleman, with six superior illustrations; how much do I hear? All about the Pilgrims, by John Bunyan! Tells where they come from an' where they landed, an' what they done *after* they landed! Here's a picter of one of 'em going about Plymouth, peddlin' with a pack on his back!"

The crowd were overcome by that last statement, and the book immediately sold at a high figure.

I stated earlier in this letter that I had not purchased extensively at the Wandoos about here.

I *did*, somewhat so, at one.

It had been my custom to send my man, or take him with me, in anticipation of bargains in farming tools.

Would that I had always done so. For my man knows more about farming tools than I do: but with over confidence I attended one alone.

I bought a plow, a cultivator, a barrow, another plow, a shovel, a (for-uses-not-mentionable-to-cars-polite) fork, a hoe, another barrow, a piece of another cultivator, the top of an old bee-hive, a "likely shoat," two iron pots, thirty market baskets, a potatoe drag, a —but I have told enough.

A friendly neighbor placed his market wagon at my disposal and, between us, we conveyed my purchases to my farm.

I called my man to look at them.

He walked about each article several times with a serious air; then he looked at me: then he resumed his inspection of my purchases; and then, I thought, he smiled.

"Well," said I, "what do you think of them?"

"Them there is very or'nary plows," said he "one on 'em aint good for nothing: haint got no mould board. T'other may do for working out for blackberries: that there biggest cultivator I wouldn't use if I was you, without I wanted to spile "Abe" an' lay "Pete" up for a week or so—its one o' them or'nary heavy draught things as 'll kill a horse in three days: the *teeth* in them harrers is good, the biggest pot would do to bile turnips in for the cow, but there's a hole in the bottom. The "—

"Enough!" I cried. "Say no more!"

I haven't bought anything at one of the confounded Wandoos since.

In my opinion they are humbugs.

Well, well, I must live and learn; there is no one who is not ignorant of very many things.

There *was* a funny instance of this truth that occurred in Boston Harbor a couple of summers ago, which I must tell you, though the story introduces my wife in her (at that time) lack of knowledge in some simple marine names and things.

We were spending a little time on one of the beautiful islands in the Harbor, and among other pleasant sojourners there was a large and very handsome Newfoundland dog.

One day he was missing.

He was a great swimmer, and presently the ladies—having gotten into their silly heads the idea that he had swum out to sea—appeared on the heights looking all abroad for him with telescopes and opera glasses.

And at length they discovered him.

Yes, there he was, plainly to be seen about two miles from land breasting the billowy surges and combatting with the salty wave!

There was no doubt about it!

So his master, getting quickly into a boat with four stout oarsmen, pulled lustily for the spot.

We saw him approach to within about a quarter of a mile of the poor creature, then turn and row leisurely back.

I hurried to meet him.

"Nothing but a lobster buoy," he cried in a pet at the sell he had suffered.

So I went to tell the ladies the reason for his return.

"But why," said my wife, regarding me with great astonishment and a considerable touch of horror;—"Why *didn't* they stop to save the poor lobster boy?"

WARREN.

(For the Saturday Press.)

WOULD YOU?

I'd like to have a home upon
Some sloping mountain side,
With stately walls and turrets fair,
Lifting their peaks with pride,
With carved doors of cunning taste,
And windows clear and high,
And stately trees of rapid growth
Whose tops should reach the sky.
Would you?

I would not have a simple cot
With pig-weed at my door,
With shelf to hold my bread and cheese,
And rushes on the floor;
With tubs and pails, and bright tin pans
Put out to catch the sun,
And where poor woman's labor, though
She try, is never done.
Would you?

I'd like to have soft silken robes,
And jewels for my hair,
And have a dainty maid, whose art
Should make me always fair;
Who'd sing when I was weary, and
Would laugh when I was gay,
And help me make of all this life,
One pleasant holy day.
Would you?

I would not have a coarse patch'd gown,
With apron made of check,
And have to come and go, at some
Dull dronish husband's beck;
And have to peel potatoes, and
Go out and weed the peas,
And then go down and scrub the floor
Upon my bended knees.
Would you?

If love is pleasant in a cot
Where poverty abides,
It surely must be better, far,
Where Croesus daily rides;
So I would be a millionaire,
And know that all I meet
Would like to be my heirs, when death
Bids me with haste, retreat.
Would you?

ALICE GILL.

(From the London "Fun.")

NELLIE'S TRIALS.

ACT I.

SCENE—*A garden. Enter* Sir Marmaduke Wylie.

SIR M.—Hush! I am a villain, and will dissemble. [*Dissembles.*

Enter RALPH WARRINGTON.

RALPH.—I am good and pure as the driven snow, though somewhat weak, and an awful coward. Moreover I love Nellie.

Enter PAUL WARRINGTON.

PAUL—I am my brother's brother, and therefore bound to fight all his duels.

Enter BASTER WELDOD.

BASTER W.—I ab the fred of everybody. Let us all dridk. [*They all drink.*

SIR M. *to Ralph*—You love Nellie?

RALPH—Undoubtedly.

SIR R.—Then we will fight.

RALPH—We will—at two to-morrow morning in the dark.

[*Exuent* SIR MARM., BASTER WELDOD *and* PAUL.

RALPH—Oh, Nellie!

Enter NELLIE *from the Manor-House.*

NELLIE—My Ralph! *(They embrace).* Here is a sealed packet which I was charged by my expiring mamma not to open until I found one who really loved me.

RALPH *(opening it and reading an enormous deed at a glance)*—These are title deeds of the Manor House, and I perceive that it belongs to you.

NELLIE—To me! Joy!

Enter Sir Marmaduke.

SIR. M. *(aside)*—To her? 'Tis well. But no matter.

[*Exit* SIR M.

NELLIE—Farewell, Ralph.

[*Exeunt at opposite entrances.*

Enter Paul Warrington.

PAUL—My brother is to fight a duel with Sir Marmaduke, but as I am *his* brother, also, it is my duty to fight it for him.

Enter Sir Marmaduke *from the Manor House.*

SIR M.—Ha, Paul, here? 'Tis well! 'Tis passing well *(calling to some one within the house)*. Good bye.

PAUL—He said good-bye! Then he *must* have been in Nellie's chamber. She is clearly false to my brother, so it is clearly my duty to fight Sir Marmaduke. (*To Sir Marmaduke.*) Fight?

SIR M.—Yes.

[*They fight, and* PAUL *is wounded.*

PAUL—I die!

Enter everybody, all at once, from everywhere.

RALPH—My brother!

PAUL—Nellie is false to you—but don't fight Sir Marmaduke.

[*Dies to all appearances.*

Enter a Comic Servant.

COMIC S.—O, my delicate sensibilities! Somebody please kick me. *(Somebody kicks him.)* O, my delicate sensibilities!

[*Exit* Comic Servant.

ACT II.

SCENE—*Room in Baster Weldod's house. Enter* Baster W.

BASTER W.—How beautiful is truth!

Enter A Gipsy, *with a beard from his forehead downwards.*

GIPSY—Good-morrow!

BASTER W.—What would you? If it is charity, take all I have.

GIPSY—It is not charity. Behold!

[*Takes off his beard, and turns out to be Paul Warrington.*

BASTER W.—Ah, Paul! So you are dot dead.

PAUL—No. But I want revenge on Sir Marmaduke. Will you assist me?

BASTER W.—What, assist you to wreak a vedgeadce on by oldest fred? Certaidly, with pleasure. But, soft, he cubs!

Enter Sir Marmaduke.

SIR M—I want a tool to aid me in my nefarious schemes.

BASTER W.—Here is wud.

[*Points to Paul.*

SIR M.—'Tis well, but no matter. *(To Paul.)* Help me to carry off all the ladies in the country, to murder everyone who thwarts me, and to set fire to all the manor houses in the neighborhood.

PAUL—I will. But first sign a paper confessing that you are the guilty instigator of these bloody deeds.

SIR M.—I will. I will risk it. No harm can possibly come of it. *(Signs confession and gives it to him).* Tis well—but no—oh, dear no—*no* matter!

Enter Comic Servant.

COMIC S.—O, my delicate sensibilities! Somebody please kick me. *(Somebody kicks him).* O, my delicate sensibilities.

[*Exit* Comic Servant.

ACT III.

SCENE 1—*Room in Sir Marmaduke's House. Enter* Sir Marmaduke *and* Paul.

SIR M.—I have got Nellie here, she will not listen to my overtures, and she has the title of the Manor, so I want her got rid of.

PAUL—'Tis well! O, 'tis very well! Nay, 'tis passing well! Listen; I am a medical practitioner as well as a gipsy!

SIR M.—Ha! but soft, no matter! I understand you. You would visit her as a leech?

PAUL—I would.

BAND—Twiddle-iddle-um!

SIR M.—You would injure her?

PAUL—I would.

BAND—Twiddle-iddle-um!

SIR M—You would poison her?

PAUL—I would.

INDIGNANT BAND—TWUM!!!

SIR M—'Tis well, but no matter, I should say, soft! Go and poison her!

PAUL—I will, and then I will burn the manor house.

SIR W.—Take care that Ralph, Baster Weldod, Master Handyside, Master Hawkseye, Farmer Blunt, the Comic Servant, and all the other characters in the bill are in the house at the time.

PAUL—I will.

SIR M.—'Tis well—but soft—no matter!

[*Exit* Sir M.

SCENE 2—*Nellie's Room. Enter* Nellie.

NELLIE—I am very miserable, for Ralph has deserted me since he heard that I was suspected of being false to him, and he is to be married to Alice.

Enter Paul.

PAUL—Nellie! I am Paul.

[*Takes off his beard.*

NELLIE—Then you are not dead?

PAUL—O, no, I have come to save you.

Enter Comic Servant.

COMIC S.—O, my delicate sensibilities! Please somebody kick me. *(Somebody kicks him).* O, my delicate sensibilities!

Exit Comic Servant.

NELLIE—There is a very simple way out of this house, but as I wish to meet cnnning by cunning, I will affect to be dead.

[*Exit, affecting to be dead.*

Enter Sir Marmaduke.

SIR M.—Is the deed done?

PAUL—It is, she is dead.

SIR M.—Ha! No matter, but soft! 'Tis well.

Enter Ralph.

RALPH *(surprised)*—Sir Marmaduke? You here? In your own house?

SIR M.—Aye, but no matter, coward!

RALPH—Hah!

SIR M.—Paltry coward, I despise ye!

RALPH—This is hard to bear.

SIR M.—Then fight me.

RALPH—I will not, for I am no coward! Ralph Warrington may submit to every indignity that you can heap upon him without a murmur, for did you not kill his brother? But he is no coward.

[*Exit very quickly.*

Enter Comic Servant.

COMIC S.—O, my delicate sensibilities! Please somebody kick me. *(Somebody kicks him).* O, my delicate sensibilities!

[*Exit* Comic Servant.

SCENE 3—*The Manor House.* Farmer Blunt, Alice, *and* Ralph *discoursing. Enter* Sir Marmaduke.

SIR M.—I have made arrangements for the death of everybody in the piece, except the Gipsy—now to settle him.

FARMER—What would you, sir?

SIR M—The Gipsy is going to set fire to the Manor House.

Enter Paul, *still disguised.*

PAUL—Yes, but he instigated me—see here is his confession.

[*Produces confession.*

SIR M.—But it is not signed by me. It is signed "Paul Warrington!"

PAUL—Confusion! In the hurry of the moment I quite forgot that he ought to have signed his own name instead of mine.

[*They all fire pistols at each other, which miss fire.*

And if our kind friends in front will only signify their approbation, there will not be a happier wedding party in all England than

NELLIE'S TRIALS.

(From the Boston Evening Gazette, Feb. 4.)

JOSH BILLINGS.

This quaint, genial, and philosophical humorist, "talked" to the people of Boston on Thursday and Friday evenings, with excellent success. Those who *went*, expecting to hear a grave and severely intellectual lecture, were *not there* if we might judge by the pleasant greeting of the lecturer and the warm applause elicited by his remarks. His natural humor, however, is not of the boisterous kind, and that which strikes the deepest is what is not demonstrative more than in the feeling it awakens in the hearer, that simply smiles its recognition. He said many things for the sake of making people laugh, and nothing else; but his wisest sayings—the original Billings—were those worth carrying away. He has written more really good things than any writer of the mis-spelt school, and the wonder has often been expressed that he should resort to the abuse of orthography in his efforts; but he is a plain man, impelled by a crowd of good things that make writing a necessity, without the assurance to give them in the first person—therefore J. B. His lecturing is also a necessity. The people will hear and see him. Curtis says that when a man has stood upon his head successfully everybody wants to see how he did it. Therefore they invite him, urge him, pay him, to come before them—the last irresistible—but he must go on with the old trick, and continue to stand on his head. Therefore the aforesaid J. B. has to preserve his identity as far as practicable before his audience. Hence his talk is mainly a re-issue of the old currency—a repetition of the acrobatic feat—and his hearers like it, or those who are so sensible as to like fun. "Josh Billings"—which it is Mr. Henry W. Shaw, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., is a native of Massachusetts, born in Lanesborough, Berkshire. His father, Mr. Henry Shaw, was a prominent politician of the Whig school, the friend of Clay, and a member of the sixteenth Congress, who removed to Fort Washington, New York, in 1648, to Newburg in 1854, and died in Peekskill in 1857. Mr. Shaw (J. B.) has resided in the West, been ruined several times, been a man of many inventions, descending gracefully at last from the pedestal of the auctioneer to the writer and lecturer, where we trust he will stick and realize. He is a man of family, large-framed, large-hearted, with a pleasant shake of the hand and a face full of good humor, looking in all respects as Billings ought, with a hat on one side, as previous attempts in that line.

THE NEW YORK SATURDAY PRESS.

HENRY CLAPP, JR., EDITOR.

Office of Publication: No. 64 Nassau Street, New York City.

Post-Office Address: Box 2120, N. Y.

Price, $3.00 a Year 6 Cents a Number.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1866.

The first number of the new issue of the Saturday Press will be ready on Saturday, the third of March (three weeks from to-day.) News-agents will please send in their extra orders at least ten days in advance.

LITERARY MATTERS.

BOOKS.

That brilliant sensationalism of Harper's Weekly, "No More American Books," reads rather queerly beside the recent announcements of the great publishing houses in this city and Boston. The Harpers themselves are out in force. So are also the Appletons. So likewise are Hurd & Houghton. Perhaps, however, Ticknor & Fields offer the most appetizing bill of fare. They are to give the public, shortly, George Arnold's "Drift, a Sea-Shore Idyl, and other Poems," of which Mr. Winter is editor; "Snow Bound, a Winter Idyl," by Whittier; a second series of "Spare Hours," by Dr. John Brown; another poem by Swinburne; a life of J. G. Percival, and several more works that we have not space to name. This well-known firm, by the way, have found their business in New York so decidedly on the increase, that the pleasant little shop in Broadway will shortly be abandoned for an establishment more in accordance with the magnitude of their trade.

Of books already published, "A Noble Life," by the author of "John Halifax" (Harper Brothers) is one of the most admirable. We have not read, for many a day, a novel more chaste in style or pure in moral. Its pathos is exquisitely tender, and the main incidents of the story are managed with consummate power. The poor, deformed, gentle-hearted Earl of Cainforth is a character not easy to forge.—Doolittle's "Social Life among the Chinese" (Harper Brothers) is one of those works "without which," to quote Shakespeare or somebody else, "no gentleman's library is complete," being the most thorough and the dryest collection of the odds and ends of the gay and fastidious manners and customs of the inhabitants of the Flowery Empire that has ever gotten itself into print. It is a pity, though, that the author did not abate his ambition, and deliver over his superabundant material to Howadji Curtis, for then we should have had a volume which common people like ourselves, as well as scholars, might have revelled in.

AUTHORS.

In Ticknor & Fields' Every Saturday there are a half-dozen clever cabinet pictures of Boston *litterateurs*, done for the Revue des Deux Mondes by M. Ernst Duvecquier De Hansanne.

Rambling on—but now westward—we find that tough old Indian antiquarian, George Catlin, turning up again in Wilkesboro, Valley of Wyoming, Penn., whence he advertises for subscriptions to a three volumed elephantine folio work to be entitled "Souvenirs of the North American Indians in the middle of the 19th Century." He has been travelling some eight years, and has gathered innumerable illustrations; yet how meagre will be his pecuniary reward, even if he succeeds in getting patrons!—Still farther west, on the Pacific shore in fact, we discover in some of the California papers, obituary notices of Chas. F. Browne, who is nevertheless the most thoroughly alive man in the South, where he has been lecturing several weeks. They were mislead by the news item of the terrible death by oil-explosion of Mr. Artemus Ward and wife in Worcester, Mass. The notices are flattering to a degree, and one of the journalists is at pains to inform its readers that Mr. Browne has evidently married since leaving this State. As to the children, he is silent.—It might be thought a rather queer transition to pass from Browne to Shakspeare; but we cannot refrain from noting that way up north of Washington Territory (which mourns the non-appearance of Mercer and his gentle cargo, nor will it be comforted) is Vancouver Id., and the office of the Nanaimo Gazette. In the advertising columns of this out-of-the-world sheet, is a Mr. Shakespear who "keeps always on hand dry goods, boots and shoes, and small groceries," and another gentleman of the same name who has a photograph gallery. The latter strikes us as having adopted a very appropriate profession. If his pictures are only half as good as those of a certain William Shakespeare who lived, we believe, in Stratford-upon-Avon and played in Globe Theatre, London, some three centuries since, the citizens of Nanaimo may be deemed tolerably fortunate in their generation.

MAGAZINES, ETC.

We are a little too early or too late for the monthlies. Nevertheless we must stop a moment to express our extreme liking for the article entitled "Charlotte Bronte's Lucy Stone" in the February number of Harper's. The monthly record of current events is an admirable speciality of this serial, and has very properly been considerably enlarged. Our city readers have doubtless observed certain square or oblong posters in gorgeous tints posted over all the dead walls, and lamp-posts—these are the street bills of the Sunday Magazine and the Argosy, English periodicals, which are imported and sold at the same price as the Atlantic, or Harper's. The red and yellow of the placards owes its origin probably to the foggy skies of London, which make anything cheerful in the way of color very acceptable to the cockneys. The Argosy is Charles Reade's new enterprize, and is exceedingly clever. Bunce & Huntington's Town and Country, which is to appear in April, has already had two editors fathered on it—Bayard Taylor and R. H. Stoddard. Why won't somebody suggest the Good Gray Poet, and so give us a triumvirate?——Concerning newspapers there is nothing very new, except that the Tribune will shortly enlarge to the size of the London Times, adopting the wide columns of that stately sheet and so beat Mr. Raymond on his own ground. Readers of Harper's Weekly are beginning to congratulate themselves on the fact that "Inside" must shortly subside, as there are only eighteen chapters to come. The more we read of it, the more we admire the extraordinary strength the author's wife evinced in carrying it to church. Women of ordinary mould would have broken down under it.

(For the Saturday Press.)

AT HER FEET.

Softly the shadows rise and fall
Athwart the slowly darkening wall,
Lit by the fire's faint rays,
The maiden reclines in the old arm chair,
At her feet the lover is kneeling there
Nor doth ever his face upraise.

The flickering fire more dimly burns,
Her dreamy eyes on him she turns,
While the shadows fold them round;
Still kneeleth he there at the maiden's feet,
Nor yet thro' all the moments fleet
Doth lift his eyes from the ground.

From the fast settling gloom the shadows have fled,
Nor moon nor stars their radiance shed
On maiden or lover true,
But list—'tis her voice—how dreamy and slow!
"'Tis time dear boy, I think, to go,
If you've finished tying that shoe."

DRAMATIC FEUILLETON.

BY FIGARO.

"I think, my dear Figaro," said one of my æsthetic friends to me, the other night, "that your last Feuilleton was a great success; you aimed at nothing—and hit it."

"How so?" I asked, after thanking him for the compliment to my marksmanship.

"Why," said he, "you know as well as I do that your only object was to obfusticate your readers," (yes, sir, he actually said obfusticate!) "and make them believe that you were opposed to 'elevating the drama,' when we all know that the contrary is the fact, and that you could prove it, if necessary, from the very Feuilleton in question."

Now did you ever hear such a thing, Mr. Editor?

It is true, I am in favor of "elevating the drama," (I would elevate it sky-high, if it would save me from ever having to write about it again) but in what way did I intimate that I wasn't?

True, I said I liked to have my "Balloon-Weddings" and my "Child-Stealers," as well as my "Merry Wives," and my "Macbeths"—yes, and my Ravels and my Hanlons, as well as my Booths and my Wallacks—but what does that prove?

Simply that I agree with the old proverb that "variety is the spice of life," and think that the stage, which professes to represent every phase of life, should therefore be all spice.

Is that treason against High Art?

Well, then, make the most of it.

There is no use discussing the question, Mr. Editor, the world will have its "cakes and

ale:" and in this matter, as in most others, I am on the side of the world, or, if you prefer it, on the side of "human nature," which, being the best nature we have, I am disposed to go in for it.

Not that I would say this to my æsthetic friend; for he would call me frivolous, flippant, trivial, insincere, and all that—which I couldn't stand; but I say it to *you* because you are the most human person (the subscriber excepted) that I have the honor of knowing.

Perhaps, some day or other, you will be humane as well as human, in which case you will write these Feuilletons yourself, and possibly say something, now and then, about the drama—a subject which, all things considered, wouldn't be totally out of place.

But what would you do when you happened to fall upon a week like this, with seven or eight theatres in operation, and nothing new going on at any one of them?

I give you my word that I have been racking my brains for over two hours simply to think of something fresh to say—if it were but a word—about any piece now on the New York boards.

Impossible.

The two pieces making the most sensation are Bulwer's "Richelieu" at the Winter Garden and Mosenthal's "Leah" at Niblo's; and tell me what there is fresh to be said about either of them, or about the manner in which they are acted.

"Richelieu," it is true, is better put upon the stage than it ever was before, either here or elsewhere; but the compliment thus paid to it is ill-deserved, since Bulwer has utterly misrepresented the character of Richelieu, (who was anything but the benevolent old idiot that he represents him) and even Booth, with all his talent, fails to do anything more with the part than to subdue and Hamletize it.

In respect to "Leah"; the only thing that can be said is that it appeals to the public sympathy more strongly than ever, and that Miss Bateman plays the title-rôle—the fascinating but persecuted Jewish maiden—with a power which moves all hearts, though it has not yet disarmed all criticism.

I dropped in to see the last two acts of the piece an evening or two since, and am half-ashamed to confess that I exhibited as much weakness on the occasion as if I had been a woman.

I wonder whether I shall do the same thing, next week, when I see her in the more stately rôle of Bianca; for note that, despite its immense success, she plays Leah for the last time to-night, and will devote the rest of her engagement, which closes next Saturday, to "The Italian Wife" and "The Lady of Lyons."

But hold: in saying, just now, that there was nothing new on the New York boards, I quite forgot the last sensation at the Olympic.

The fact is, it was brought out on Thursday, when, as on the next day (for I am everybody's man, Friday), the theatres—for reasons which wouldn't interest you—are a sealed book to me.

The name of the piece you know, of course, for it is already the talk of the town; but just read what C. B. S. says about it in yesterday's TIMES: I have not seen a more delicious bit of writing this long time.

If Mrs. John Wood should ever again resolve to leave the city for a starring engagement, it is to be hoped that some benevolent individual, with leisure and taste, may be prevailed upon to sue out an injunction against her. There is no reason why she should not be "restrained" in a habit so vulgar and superfluous. The worst of actresses are "stars," and she is of the best. Her vitality and continual wide-awakefulness are indeed without a parallel on the stage. In her proper sphere she is without a rival; in that other sphere which she sometimes invades, where spouting and over-dressing are the characteristics, she has many superiors.

To see her in the best possible light our readers have only to witness the farce produced last evening called "Who Killed Cock Robin?" That momentous question of the nursery has not been set at rest any more than that graver theme of who inflicted an outrage on the late Mr. William Patterson. Still the author of this excellent piece has gained his end—which was laughter; and more than his end in supplying Mrs. John Wood with a part in which she is absolutely perfect. The name of Satanella Tinkle barely suggests the trophies. Her father was a muffin baker; a profession, trade, or business which surely relieves the mind from all thoughts of romance. Yet the fair Satanella was nursed beneath the shadows of the halls of the Montezumas. The consequences are dreadful to tell. She inherits not merely the merits of the father whose business was muffins, but of the Mexican mother whose business we take it was jumping down people's throats. She is wild as a lioness one moment, and trivial as a muffin bell at another. When the piece opens she is in raptures with a lover named Robin. The latter, however, has tasted the qualities of his sweetheart and prefers a milder article elsewhere:—at 10½ Great Jones street, to be exact. He therefore sends a hardy friend to take his place. Jack Raggett, the individual in question, invents a fib appropriate to the occasion. He says that Robin has been killed in a duel, in which he was his second. Subsequently, the matter becomes involved in the miraculous way known only to farce-writers, and the lady believes that Jack is the man who killed Robin. Thereupon she resolves to marry him, in order that she may work out her revenge, according to the rites officially established by Mr. Alfred Tennyson. When married, she puts in operation all sorts of little annoyances, very amusing to the audience and irritating to the sufferer. In the end, and when matters are becoming serious, an explanation is made, and the parties become jollily satisfied with each other.

I believe "Cock Robin" is followed by "Black-Eyed Susan," in which Davenport shivers his timbers and performs other nautical manœuvres in a style that would indicate that he was born "before the mast."

However, I haven't seen the piece this long time, and on the whole prefer Dan Bryant's version of it, since Dan gives William a black eye instead of Susan, and sets me laughing at the performance instead of crying over it.

Between you and me, crying is a hydraulic operation which I am not fond of: hence my dislike for tragedies, which rarely interest me except when they are bad enough to be amusing—and this (to be just) they generally are, especially when they happen to be of the "native" or Shrewsbury order, in which case I like to take one of them on the half-shell just before going to bed.

But here comes the printer, saying he has two or three columns of literary matter to set up, this week, and I must cut *my* matter short.

Good: it is time you had a little literary matter, and it is time, also, that I found something to say or else closed my article.

Well, I have absolutely nothing to say, and being a friend of the "early closing movement," will close at once.

Only please remember,

1. That Frank Chanfrau finishes his splendid engagement at Wood's Theatre to-night with his delineation of "Mose."

2. That he will be followed, for six nights only, by Frank Drew, who will appear in "Rip Van Winkle."

3. That there will be a grand Leah matinée at Niblo's to-day.

4. That the operatic matinée at the Academy (Crispino e la Comare) will commence at 11 o'clock, to give the Philharmonics a chance for their matinée at 3.

5. That there will also be matinées to-day at the Broadway Theatre (Solon Shingle), at the New York Circus, and at the Museum.

6. That the opera of "Martha" will be given at the Academy next Monday for the first and only time this season.

7. That Theodore Thomas will give his fourth Symphony Soirée this evening at Concert Hall, assisted by Adelaide Phillips, William Mason, S. B. Mills, and others.

8. That J. W. Wallack takes his benefit at Wallack's Theatre next Tuesday evening, playing his great part in "The Iron Mask."

9. That "Henry Dunbar" will be repeated at Wallack's on Monday.

10. That Gayler's new piece, written to give Silvester's Magic Fountain a chance to play again, will be brought out next Monday at the Continental in Boston, with the Hanlons.

11. That Miss Lucille Western is shortly to commence an engagement at Wood's Theatre, opening with Gayler's "Child Stealer;" and

12. That when your "new issue" (of which I hear wonders) is ready, and you can give a fellow a little more space, you shall hear much more fully from

Yours while you continue to prosper,

FIGARO.

P. S. The début of a Miss Lacoste, in English tragedy, is announced to take place on Saturday evening next, at the Academy of Music: the play of the occasion (never before performed) will be "Virginia of Rome," by Mr. Isaac C. Pray.

The exhibition and sale of the "Ruggles Gems" at Jones' bookstore, 843 Broadway, will close on Thursday next. There will be a similar exhibition, next week, in Buffalo. The demand for these beautiful little pictures is such that hundreds of imitations of them are in the market, but so badly done that there is not even need of putting purchasers on guard against them.

At the annual meeting of the American Institute, held on Thursday evening last, Mr. Horace Greeley was elected President, and Mr. S. D. Tillman re-elected Treasurer.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Rudiments of Music, for the use of Teachers and their Pupils, and especially intended for Class Teaching in Private and Public Schools. By Eugene Trastour De Varano, of New Orleans, Louisiana. 12mo. pp 138. New York: S. T Gordon.

A Third Reader, of a grade between the second and Third Readers of the School and Family Series. By Marcus Wilson. 12mo. pp 216, New York: Harper & Bros.

Guy Deverell, a novel. By J. Sheridan le Fanu, author of Uncle Silas, etc. 8mo. pp 149. New York: Harper & Bros.

Two Men, a novel. By Elizabeth Stoddard, author of The Morgesons. 12mo. pp 291. New York: Bunce and Huntington.

Miss Oona McQuarrie. A sequel to Alfred Hagart's Household. By Alexander Smith, author of a Life Drama, etc. 12mo. pp 228. Boston: Ticknor & Fields.

Social Life of the Chinese. With some account of their Religious, Governmental, Educational, and Business Customs and Opinions, with special but not exclusive reference to Fuhchan. By Rev. Justus Doolittle, 14 years member of the Fuhchan Mission of the American Board. With over 150 illustrations, in 2 vols. 12mo. New York: Harper & Bros.

A Noble Life, by the author of John Halifax, etc. 12mo. pp 302. New York: Harper & Bros.

Hereward; the Last of the English, by Charles Kingsley, author of Two Years Ago, etc. 12mo. Boston: Ticknor & Fields.

(*For the Saturday Press.*)

SOAP BUBBLES.

Just at my side in his rocking chair
  My little Max is sitting
He with his soap and pipe, and I
  With the stocking I am knitting.
He fashions ships from the milk white spray,
I freight them with thoughts as they float away.

Moored to the pipe is a phantom barque
  With the white sails spreading fast,
And pennons woven of rainbows, float
  From the top of the golden mast.
But a cloud creeps over the face of day
And sunbeams and rainbows flee away.

So I thought of the tiny barque which sails
  To the shadowy land with mine—
The waves which are bearing it out to sea
  Are crested with golden shine.
Shall it reach the haven beneath the cloud—
When the waves are black and the tempest loud?

Lo! The ship has gone, and a mimic world
  Of the wonderous pipe is born,
And pictures glowing in rainbow frames
  Its crystaline walls adorn—
And some fairy limner has painted there
My room with its grate and rocking chair.

And so, as the chubby finger points
  To a miniature of me,
My thoughts go out to another world,
  Where I long enthroned to be.
'Tis my darling's heart, and I breathe a prayer
To be absent or present reflected there.

I turned away from the thought to gaze
  Down into the merry eyes
Which were tracking the bauble with a look
  Of beautiful surprise.
When lo! it has changed into silver spray,
And the toys which freighted it,—where are they?

So, I mused as my fingers strayed amid
  Those ringlets of golden hair—
Of the bubble life, and the syren hopes
  Which mirror their beauties there,
And of many freighted with visions bright
Which had vanished out of my longing sight.

But surely a prettier bubble ne'er
  From this mystical white foam grew
And surely a dearer, sweeter face
  Was never reflected through
Than the face just veiled by that silver spray,
And the bubble my fond lips kissed away.

L. J. C.

(*From Dicken's All The Year Round.*)

PARADISE REVISITED.

Of all the innocent tastes of my childhood, two only may, I think, be said to have fairly weathered the storms and buffets of life; to have defied the disenchanting influence of time; and to flourish yet, serene and unimpaired, above the ruins of many a far more potent passion. These are pastry and pantomime.

I like a tart. Why shouldn't I like a tart? Because I am a man shall I deny the acquaintance of a Bath-bun? Must the cheese-cake lose its flavor in passing between lips on which time and nature have conferred a beard? Nonsense. I am accustomed to speak out. I like all manner of the sweetest things known to the craft of confectioner—nor would I covet a more delightful ten minutes than may be passed in renewing many a pleasing intimacy of this description. Is there, I would calmly inquire, anything brutal or unmanly in eating ladies'-fingers? Can there be more delicate enjoyment than in a meringue?

My deliberate opinion, founded upon close, occasionally furtive observation, is, that an attachment to sweet things is far more deeply rooted in the manly British breast than is generally supposed. It is my proud remembrance never to have given in to the false shame which suggests concealment of this innocent partiality. I am no more ashamed of the sweetness of my tooth than of its whiteness. At Didcot, I may have been seen to dash down the window, and call out, "Banbury-cake!" in tones asserting themselves above the thunder of the train, and almost before it stopped. I may often have been seen engaged with this—when fresh—exquisite dainty—not, as I have noticed the pusilanimous do, behind the Times—but, frankly and crumblingly, before mankind!

While writing, an idea has occurred to me. Now that wine-drinking is rapidly on the decline, why should pastry-eating—I mean in a convivial sense—not take its room? The effect at public dinners would be no less imposing.

"Gentlemen, pray charge your platters. Trifle." ["Bumpers" might still be added.]

In more private circles, the familiar wish, "May we ne'er want a friend, nor a bottle to give him!" would lose nothing in heartiness by the substitution of "tartlet" for "bottle." Since pitchers have fallen somewhat into desuetude as vehicles for port wine, "My Friend *and Fritter*," would be a positive improvement upon the popular version. Again, a very trivial change in another favorite toast, would supply us with the sentiment (accompanied say, with a round of Charlottes-Russes), "May the present moment *not* be the sweetest of our lives!"

Surely, surely, patriotism and loyalty, hitherto too much associated with champagne, may be evolved as readily from a macaroon. Cannot friendship—acknowledged to sparkle with such peculiar brightness in the bowl—glow as richly in the bosom of a Christmas pudding?

Finally, be it remembered that that exquisitely pleasurable sensation, supposed (in song) to be derivable from not retiring to one's usual residence until past daybreak, need not, of necessity, be foregone. Appetite will probably determine that point. And there is this decided advantage in my scheme, that whereas people were accustomed to continue their potations long after they had ceased to care much about it, that can never be the case with reference to the lighter lollipops which shall conclude my banquet.

Although, as I have said, devoid of that craven feeling which prompts the repudiation of such sweet friends of ones boyhood as apple-puff and mince-pie, I will own to a certain degree of embarrassment in effecting the purchase of smaller and slighter matters. Toffee I can demand in clear, unhesitating tones; as, by a liberal order it may be made to look as if intended for a neighboring nursery. Butter-Scotch, for the same reason, offers no difficulty. But I will admit that, did occasion present itself, I would prefer purchasing my barley-sugar through the intervention of an agent.

Of the latter compound, there is a kind whose paly gold exercises over me a remarkable fascination. It may be that it recalls certain ringlets, of similar form and hue, that—Well, no matter; but she and I have eaten marmalade from one gallipot—and these are not things to be forgotten.

No later than yesterday, I stood gazing irresolutely (under pretence of examining a new coffee-mill) at a cluster of these amber delicacies, enshrined in the usual vase of crystal. Suddenly a bright thought struck me. Assuming a slight cough, I stepped in.

"Have you—have—anything that's—that's good for—dear me!—eh—dear me!—a bad cold?—something to—" I pointed to my throat, groaning.

The shopman handed me a small box; hard, brown, and sour.

"Black-currant drops, sir? Much recommended."

I knew them, and declined.

"Dr. Pilberrow's Nurses' Joy, sir? Sugar-lozenges, tinctured with magnes——?"

"No, no. I wish for something—anything you have, of a softer, more lubricating—see! Such, for instance, as that yellowish substance, in the long glass."

"Barley-sugar, sir? Yes, sir. How much would you please to have, sir?"

I may be mistaken, but I fancied that the phantom of a smile stole over that young man's visage as he weighed me out a pound, throwing in a little bit over.

Equally fervent, equally unswerving, has been my attachment to that phase of dramatic art known as Pantomime. From the Cave of Doldrums, to the clown's final somerset, I am a captive to the illusive scene; bound up with its details; laying up stores of wisdom and prudence from its suggestive changes.

Why do I speak of illusion? Intercourse, for a certain number of years, with the world, has placed me in a condition to aver that pantomime is truth—truth colored, condensed, elaborated—but truth itself. Gorgeous temples, demanding reverence—with men behind, in corduroys and dirty shirt-sleeves, pushing them on; gently heaving seas, the waves (invisible) punching each other's ribs, in a cloud of slate-colored dust; baronial castles, whose noble occupants must have been content to dwell, like chrysalids, in the interstices of the single wall. Clowns, boisterous, mischievous, unscrupulous; harlequins, gay, plausible, vindictive, mysterious; columbines, fair and fickle; pantaloons, with every attribute of age, except its reverence; even to the lovely Queen of Fays, who, after taking graceful leave at the close of the introduction, reappears at the general finish, standing on one leg above a revolving wheel, surrounded by a green glare, changing into red, and thence into an unpleasant smell. All these things, only in a far less honest form, have I encountered beyond the wall of a theatre; and if it soothe me to sit and witness their reproduction, under circumstances which can no longer betray, who shall censure? I don't care *who*. To-day—just for to-day—I am a boy again, and my two boyish fancies shall have their ample range. I will lunch at a pastrycook's, and I will subsequently attend a pantomime. Yet, hold! Boys are gregarious. Is it to renew the wholesomer part of youth to feast and gaze without a friend! Where shall I

seek another lad? It occurs to me, in a manner so abrupt and singular as to be almost worthy of psychological analysis—had I an hour to spare—that my excellent neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Tibblethwayte, are spending the Christmas from home, unavoidably leaving three at least of their little flock behind them. What if I obtain them for the day and evening?

I looked at my watch. It could not yet be their dinner-time. Their young appetites must be in the very highest pastry condition. I was at the house in three minutes, requesting, with respectful compliments, audience of Miss Cavalier, the preceptress—a lady of infinite stiffness and inexorable will.

Reassured by the tidings that Miss Cavalier was absent for the day, I made my way to the school-room, and, stilling the noisy greetings, announced to Nurse Edmonds that I required the loan of her charges.

There was a pause of trembling expectation, for nurse looked graver than could be desired.

"Missis had hexpressed her wishes as the poor little things might have a little henter-tainment; but, of which kind?"

"It isn't a norrery?" said Master Bobby, with a look of dark suspicion.

I shook my head.

"Nor it isn't a fillysofical class-lecture?" ejaculated Miss Mattie—a tear in ambush under her eyelid, ready, in the event of an affirmative, to dim the pretty blue.

I laughed contemptuously.

"Bosh!" said Master Augustus. "Mr. Goodbody wouldn't take us to such rubbish as *that* comes to! But it isn't 'Instructive Riddles,'—eh?" the young gentleman added, with a slight diminution of confidence.

"Nor a threepenny reading?" said Mattie.

At the last suggestion there was a subdued but general groan.

"You don't like readings?" I asked, in feigned astonishment.

"Not when it's such awful (word expressive of decomposing matter) as the last," said Master Augustus, firmly.

"Why, what was it?"

"'Paradise Rewisited,' sir," explained nurse. "'By a Loacle Poet.' Ma'amselle hev took them to all the four; but they come back quite cross and sleepy, and seemed as if they couldn't tell which they was at, last."

"No wonder! Hark ye, children! *I* am intending, this day, to revisit Paradise, or what, at your age, somewhat resembled it to me. I have promised myself a Christmas Pantomime!" [A cry of joy.] "Pausing on the way, at a spot where, I am given to understand, light refreshments, adapted to juvenile tastes, may be procured, and enjoyed without fear of after consequences. Will you come with me?"

Nurse hesitated to answer the appealing looks.

"If—if ma'amselle should know it——"

"Ma'amselle *shall* know it, to-morrow. Meantime, I take upon myself the responsibility."

And, engaging to restore the other three children by a reasonable hour, I, the fourth child, carried them off in triumph.

Merry as grasshoppers, we made our way along the most disturbed thoroughfares we could find: Mattie and I leading; the boys close at our heels. I noticed with secret satisfaction that, in passing any pastrycook's—and we passed not a few—our rear-guard sensibly relaxed their pace, and even Mattie's little fingers gave an involuntary pressure. At length, as we neared a perfect wilderness of sweets, the prospect became too maddening, and Master Augustus, dashing to the front, proposed a halt.

I affected to demur, but Mattie's appealing look, and the fragrance wafted forth as we lingered in consultation on the threshold, resolved the question. We entered. Here, as a veteran, I deemed some words of caution not misplaced. I besought my ardent levies not to tilt blindly at Bath-buns, the major tarts, or great satisfying things of *any* kind, but to survey the ground, and then, tranquilly, advisedly, commence the attack.

The foray lasted so long, that, in common prudence, I was obliged to sound the recall. The damage inflicted on the enemy, especially in the arm of open tarts, was very considerable. I decline to mention my own achievements (Generals rarely do), and shall only state that, when my three charges had made their computations, there remained unaccounted for as follows:—One triangular tart, a Shrewsbury cake, three apricot puffs, one cheese-cake, and a maid-of-honor, together with some minor matters, and (I think) a glass of cherry-brandy. For all of which, notwithstanding the mystery that hung over their disappearance, I cheerfully paid.

Fortune had decreed that there was to be no pause in our delight. A bill suspended in the shop had forewarned us that there was to be at one of the larger theatres a morning performance of the Grand Christmas Pantomime, commencing at two o'clock. Just time. We should not want any dinner? Eh?

Master Augustus having requested, in the name of the party, that the meal in question might not be mentioned in their hearing for a week, we set forth.

Capital places! A brilliant house! Beautiful red glare—so different from the mere sunshine we had quitted! A crowd of happy children, from six years old to seventy, settling themselves in their places for three hours' ceaseless enjoyment. For our parts, we gave ourselves up wholly to the scene; Mattie alone looking a little grave, and casting so many nervous glances in a certain direction, that I was induced to inquire the reason.

It seemed that the figure of a lady in a neighboring box, whose back was towards us, had forcibly recalled that of Miss Cavalier.

Could it be herself?

O no, no! Mattie considered that was impossible! Miss Cavalier (I gathered from my little friend's remarks) was rather Miss Puritan in the matter of theatres, neither attending them herself, nor willingly permitting anybody else to do so. Furthermore, she regarded the half million of her fellow-Christians who, directly or indirectly, made their bread by these unhallowed institutions (not to mention the several millions, from her sovereign downward, who derived solace and amusement from them), as in the most imminent spiritual peril; evincing altogether views of the most elevated kind, and charity of that comprehensive nature which is usually found to characterize such an intelligence.

The rising of the curtain at this juncture banished all remembrance of the accidental resemblance, and the possible scolding on the morrow it had brought into Mattie's mind.

I am not going into minute detail. Enough that what succeeded surpassed our most sanguine anticipations, and even the foreshadowings of the bill itself, which was not framed with diffidence. Let me simply record that the opening scene was even more gloomy and depressing than usual. It was the abode of an individual of doubtful sex, Mr. (or Mrs.) Antiquity, who, in addition to keeping an old curiosity shop, dabbled slightly in dramatic literature; his (or her) present distress arising from the tightness of the fairy market, with reference to subjects for a pantomime. Need it be related that, in the moment of supreme despondency, a square black pitfal opened, and, after a slight delay, suggestive of the coming fairy stopping to tie her shoe, that aërial being stepped upon the stage, and presented Antiquity with all that was needed, in the form of a new and enlarged edition of Jack the Giant Killer. The mere mention of that familiar name elicited from us a burst of involuntary applause, and when the scene changed to the humble but cheerful dwelling of—how shall I describe him? Jack the elder—we resettled ourselves, as in preparation for events of thrilling interest.

Pantomime corrects history, and, whereas we had always been instructed that Jack's first victim was eighteen feet high, and resided in a cavern commodiously situated on the top of St. Michael's Mount, we now found that he began with a little stunted victim of ten feet and a half, who had no ostensible residence at all. That Jack's departure on this errand was celebrated by a ball, in which sixty young ladies, in light and brief habiliments, formed some very pretty tableaux—caused *us* no more surprise than it did the elder John, who sat and smoked the while; for, but little is known of Cornish domestic life in the days of King Arthur, and this pleasing demonstration might have filled the place of what would now have been a public dinner.

Such a hop-o'-my-thumb as we have described gave the intrepid Jack, as might be expected, very little trouble. His head (he had but one) was quickly on the road to Lyonnesse—as, now-a-days, one places a remarkable sturgeon at the foot of royalty. But the next giant was a totally different affair. His heads were three in number. His statue was variously estimated from eighteen to twenty-four feet. His temper was irascible, his appetite without limit. That this terrible monster was on the move, was rendered manifest by the numerous rustics who, with countenances pale and elongated, passed with long strides across the stage, or huddled in terrified groups at the wing. It subsequently became known that Gorgibuster's appetite was, this morning, singularly keen; he having breakfasted early, and slenderly, on a single ox. Furthermore, he was known especially to desire human flesh, having but recently devoured two-thirds of a school who had been permitted, by an indiscreet usher, to bathe near his dwelling. Some of the parents having remonstrated, Jack had been appealed to, and hence his present enterprise.

It has been a point of much dispute among modern writers, whether giants roared. This one did. A low rumbling sound, increasing in volume at every utterance, announced the

monster's approach. Music of a colossal nature accompanied the sound of mighty steps, which—had there been such an instrument near—we would have attributed to the big drum—and Gorgibuster floundered on the scene.

As he was the largest, so was he the most complete and workable giant I had ever seen. His legs displayed as much tractability as if their lower fathom or so had been cast in the mould of nature, not of art. His heads were on the best possible terms, and, but for the peculiarity of the eyes being situated in the chin, and the nose on the forehead, might have been called human. Moreover, those eyes (being practicable) admitted of being winked; and the very first wink the giant gave was the signal for a demonstration we had not expected. The giant was accosted by stentorian voices as "George!" was offered the compliments of the season, was congratulated on his growth and generally robust appearance, and was otherwise greeted so much in the style of an old acquaintance, that I referred to the bill for information, and thereby discovered that the vital principal of the giant was composed of Mr. George R. Bungaye, renowned for feats of strength and comic minstrelsy.

The giant did not always roar. He spoke in colloquial tones, and threw some light upon another mysterious question, by frankly admitting that, with regard to "*fee—faw—fum*," neither he (Gorgibuster) nor any of his brethren had the remotest idea what was intended to be conveyed by those remarkable expressions.

I have dwelt long upon this giant—for the truth is we liked him—we took to him. He was not the furious, ill-bred monster we had been taught to expect. Rumor had belied him. Gay, frank, genial, he showed himself possessed of the most attractive social attributes. He sang, he jested, he actually—though at the cost, we feared, of much pain and weariness—shuffled through the sailors' hornpipe; using his vicarious legs with as much spirit as though wicker-work were instinct with life. His very club—formed of timber which possessed the rare and curious property of collapsing, when brought into contact with any hard substance—partook of its master's yielding and peaceable disposition. And as for his appetite—when it is remembered that he had three mouths to feed, and some twenty feet of stowage-room demanding freight, I affirm that it was by no means inordinate.

With regret we witnessed the fate of this so young and happy giant? In the bright heyday of life—in the flower of appetite, always peckish, yet never voracious—he was cut off by that unfair weapon, Jack's sword of sharpness; retiring into his own stomach, so as to admit of decapitation, his three heads were cut off; and, with faces wholly unchanged, beaming and winking as in life, were transmitted to the king. An adjuration to the prostrate trunk from the gallery, to rise and give them "hot codlings," was treated with the contempt it deserved, and in a few minutes we were in the full swing and riot of the harlequinade.

Glorious was the fun. We were fortunate in our clown. More accomplished fooling was never seen, since the sun of Folly went down, in Grimaldi. All four of us, exhausted with laughter, were availing ourselves of a moment's pause in the hurry of events, to [illegible] and wipe our brows, when Mattie directed my exclamation. Following the direction of her eyes, my own fell, astonished, upon the lady to whom our attention had already been directed. She had turned round, and was leaning forward, flushed with excitement, and devouring the scene with the interest of a child of ten. Miss Cavalier!

Our parties subsequently met in the passage, Miss Cavalier walking between an old gentleman with a pleasant face and reverend gray hair, and a fair lady, who seemed to be his daughter. As I boldly presented my charges, Miss Cavalier blushed and smiled.

"Kind friends—over-persuaded—couldn't leave—pleasant spectacle—such happy faces." Some such murmurs reached my ear, as I put my little companions into the carriage, and their preceptress, following, waved me a sweet adieu.

There was no scolding on the morrow.

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On ne peut se faire une idée des services que rend le télégraphe électrique, demandez plutôt à Oscar Ducornet.

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Mon cher coquin de neveu,

J'apprends que tu fais des folies à Paris et que tu traînes dans le ruisseau le nom de ton père qui est le mien.

Je t'ai conseillé de te marier, mais tu t'es cru trop grand pour écouter mes conseils.

Tu aimes mieux faire des folies et des dettes, passer tes nuits dans l'orgie que de prendre femme et de vivre comme un honnête père de famille.

Mais je suis las d'une pareille existence, si d'ici à quinze jours tu n'es pas marié je te déshérite.

ANASTASE DUCORNET.

—Je te déshérite, c'est écrit en toutes lettres, murmure tristement Oscar.

Je perdrai ainsi douze mille livres de rente; oh! ça n'est pas à faire. Le temps des folies est passé; il faut que je me marie. Mais où trouver une femme? Je ne connais que celles qui fréquentent le bal Bullier. Si j'épousais Camélia, ma maîtresse. Fichtre! mon oncle ne plaisanterait pas!

Ah! il me vient une idée, j'ai un de mes amis qui est avoué en province, il m'a souvent dit de m'adresser à lui si je voulais me marier, parce qu'il a beaucoup de relations. Le moment est venu de m'adresser à lui.

Dépêchons-nous, car il n'y a pas un moment à perdre, si je ne veux pas être déshérité.

Balandard, mon ami, tu vas être mon providence.

Je vole au plus prochain télégraphe. Ecrire serait trop long, l'électricité vaut mieux.

Il y a un bureau en face de chez moi, c'est le ciel qui l'a placé là.

A. M. BALANDARD AVOUE.

Bon camarade,

Moi vouloir me marier, toi trouver femme à moi le plus tôt possible.

Compte sur toi.

M. BALANDARD À M. OSCAR DUCORNET.

Très cher,

J'ai ton affaire.

Moi propose à toi Euphémie Moutonnet.

Bonnes mœurs, bonne tenue, bonne dot. Est-ce que ça va?

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Ami,

Quelle tête? quelle taille? quelle tournure?

Moi pas avoir envie d'épouser hippopotame ou girafe.

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Carissime,

Moi t'envoyer photographie d'elle par la poste.

Toi pouvoir contempler traits à ton aise.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Transport de photographie trop long.

Moi être déshérité, si on perd temps.

Télégraphie bien plus commode que poste.

Toi savoir dessiner et faire portrait d'Euphémie par système Carelli.

Toi pas embellir elle.

BALANDAND À DUCORNET.

La voici sans flatterie.

(Ici un portrait.)

Vifs regrets de ne pouvoir reproduire caractère qui est charmant.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Ca me va.

Toi faire demande de suite au Moutonnet.

Réponse prompte.

BALANDARD À DECORNET.

Affaire arrangée.

Parents enchantés.

Père sauté au cou de moi: mère m'a embrassé, fille évanouie de joie.

Tableau!

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Ca n'est pas tout.

Et la dot?

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Cent mille francs et vieille tante très malade possédant beaucoup de fortune.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Pas suffisant.
Très beau les espérances, pas amusant pour le présent.
Vouloir cent cinquante mille

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Impossible.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Toi envoyer promener tribu Moutonnet.

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Crises nerveuse, syncopes, spasmes, pleurs et grincements de dents chez tous les Moutonnet.
Père être venu me trouver et proposer cent vingt-cinq.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Cent cinquante mille, pas un centime de moins.
A prendre ou à laisser.
Réponse prompte.

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Cent trente mille avec collection complète du PETIT JOURNAL et portrait encadrè de Timothée Trimm.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Ca va.

BALLANDARD À DUCORNET.

Seulement Moutonnet venir passer tous les ans un mois à Paris chez gendre.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Pas beau-père.
Beau père jamais.
Rien qu'un jour par an, a la fête du 15 août.
Lui loger à l'hôtel.

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Accepté encore.
Mais Moutonnet dire toi pas aimable.
Moi pour défense prétendre toi très original.
Quand noce?

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

Mercredi prochain.

BALANDARD À DUCORNET.

Pas mercredi prochain. Maman Moutonnet faire confitures.
A mardi.

DUCORNET À BALANDARD.

C'est entendu.
Moi retenir appartement et acheter corbeille.

OSCAR À SON ONCLE ANASTASE DUCORNET.

Bon oncle,
Moi me marier, épouser Euphémie Moutonnet.
Belle fille, bonne famille, bonne dot.
Total, bonne affaire.
Toi envoyer argent pour faire cadeaux de noce.

ANASTHASE DUCORNET À OSCAR.

Cher neveu,
Mille félicitations. Moi content de voir toi rangé.
Pas envoyer d'argent pour cadeaux de noce. Moi payer tout à Paris.
Me méfier d'un polisson comme toi.
Oscar très malin, et faire envoyer de l'argent pour mariage et le manger avec des drôlesses, et pas prendre femme légitime.

OSCAR À DUCORNET.

Pas bien de se méfier de moi.
Attendre toi tout de suite pour acheter tout.
Apporte des billets de banque.
Sois généreux pour neveu, C'est pour bien à toi, afin que toi ne pas passer pour un rat.

OSCAR DUCORNET À CAMELLIA.

Bonne petite,
Bon Oscar se marier et ne plus voir petite chérie à lui. Forcé de faire une fin.
Moi t'avoir bien aimée et te regretter toujours.

CAMELLIA À OSCAR.

Lâcheur,
Toi quitter moi du jour au lendemain et sans payer terme. Canaille, va!

OSCAR À CAMELLIA.

Ma chère,
Moi bien faire les choses.
Toi recevoir demain matin cinquante francs.

CAMELLIA À OSCAR.

Cinq cents francs ou bonne petite Camellia fera une esclandre la veille de la noce.

OSCAR À CAMELLIA.

Cher ange, tu les auras.

***

L'EMPLOYÉ.—Monsieur, il faut sortir, on va fermer.
OSCAR DUCORNET.—Déjà?
—Mais il est minuit et vous êtes ici depuis onze heures du matin.
—C'est vrai, j'ai fait toutes mes affaires et je crois n'avoir pas perdu ma journée.

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MONDAY—MARTHA.

TUESDAY—DON SEBASTIAN.

WEDNESDAY—DON SEBASTIAN.

THURSDAY, Opera in Brooklyn—CRISPINO.

FRIDAY—FRA DIAVOLO.

SATURDAY MATINEE—POLIUTO,

Madame CAROZZI-ZUCCHI in her grand role of Paolina for this time only during the season.

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MR. S. B. MILLS,

MR. WILLIAM MASON,

MR. A. F. TOULMIN, harpist,

A GRAND ORCHESTRA OF SIXTY PERFORMERS.

PROGRAMME:

Overture, Manfred, op. 115 .....Schumann

Air, "Return, O God of Hosts," Sampson .....Handel

Miss Adelaide Phillips.

Concerto for two pianos, E flat [first time].....Mozart

Messrs. Mills, Mason, and Orchestra.

Aria, "Voi che Sapete," Nozze di Figaro. .....Mozart

Miss Adelaide Phillips.

Introduction to Tristan and Isolde [first time]....Wagner

Symphony, No. 5, C minor, op. 67..... Beethoven

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Characters by Messrs. J. W. Wallack, John Gilbert, Charles Fisher, Mark Smith, Young, B. T. Ringgold, Norton, Browne, Williamson, Pope, Graham, Ward, and Cashin, Miss Madeline Henriques, and Miss Carman.

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The powerful and effective five-act play, entitled

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SECOND WEEK

of a new Comedy in two acts, entitled

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN,

FIRST WEEK

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BLACK-EYED SUSAN.

MRS. JOHN WOOD

in both pieces,

with the favorite actor,

MR. E. L. DAVENPORT.

The performance will commence with

WHO

KILLED

COCK

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Joseph, a Capuchin.....Mr. John Dyott

Louis XIII..... .....Mr. W. A. Donaldson

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Mr. C. Kemble Mason

Sieur de Beringhen..... .....Mr. W. S. Andrews

François,.....Mr. W. F. Burroughs

Gaston, Duke of Orleans..... .....Mr. J. Duell

Governor of Bastille.....Mr. H. Bland

Marion de l'Orme.....Mrs. Marie Wilkins

Doors will open at 7 o'clock; performance at 7½ precisely.

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WEDNESDAY, 14th,

GRAND BOOTH MATINEE

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RICHELIEU.

Commencing at One o'clock precisely.

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In order to facilitate the arrangements of families for the ensuing week, Mr. Wheatley has thought it advisable to announce the plays in which Miss BATEMAN will appear

MONDAY 12,

WEDNESDAY, 14th,

and

FRIDAY, 16th inst.,

Rev. Dean Milman's famous tragedy,

THE ITALIAN WIFE,

will be presented, in which

MISS BATEMAN,

will sustain her very celebrated character,

BIANCA;

Or, the Italian Wife.

TUESDAY, 13,

THURSDAY, 15,

and

SATURDAY, 17,

Bulwer's favorite play—the

LADY OF LYONS.

will be performed, with

MISS BATEMAN as PAULINE.

Mr. Wheatley deeply regrets that Miss Bateman's unprecedentedly successful engagement must terminate on the 17th instant, in consequence of prior arrangements, there can, therefore, be no repetitton of their attractive and intellectual representation.

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LAST WEEK BUT ONE

of the Engagement of the

GREAT AMERICAN TRAGEDIENNE,

MISS BATEMAN.

LAST NIGHT BUT ONE OF

LEAH,

Mr. Wheatley, in reply to innumerable inquiries, begs to state that in accordance with the universally expressed desire to see Miss Bateman, in some of those characters in which she first established herself in the estimation of the New York public, she will be compelled to withdraw this favorable impersonation after this week.

Miss Bateman's engagements elsewhere prevent the possibility of a continuance of this most extraordinary successful one.

Regretting, as Mr. Wheatley must do, the withdrawal of a performance which hundreds have been unable to procure seats to witness, he has prevailed upon Miss Bateman to give a

GRAND LEAH MATINEE,

On SATURDAY, Feb, 10,

To meet the wishes of families who have found it impossible to attend the evening representations of this wonderful and just esteemed young lady.

SATURDAY Evening, February 10, 1866, and every night during the week, will be presented the most

SUCCESSFUL PLAY OF THE DAY,

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LEAH,

in which Miss BATEMAN will sustain her original character.

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THURSDAY, FRIDAY and SATURDAY

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